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At
The Gateway
of Song

SCHUYLER R.
MYERS



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At the Gateway of Song

POEMS

By

SCHUYLER R. MYERS



1924

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A MAID'S FIRST LOVE

NEVER sang the birds so lovely;
Never blushed the rose so fair;
Every nook when you are with me
In your beauty seems to share.
Let the darkling tempest mutter
As the night obscures the day:
In the sweetness of your presence
Every fear will fly away.

Oft amid my daily duties
Do my thoughts return to you;
Then the little task grows music
Whatsoe'er these fingers do.
Let my heart be ne'er so lonely,
Grief and care my spirit sway:
In a dream of your sweet presence
Every cloud will fly away.

Sweet it were by these fair meadows
In a cottage hearth to dwell;
Every still, familiar pathway
Of our happy past would tell.

At the Gateway of Song

But if fate turn cold and cruel,
And your step afar must stray;
For the love of your sweet presence
I with you will fly away.

At the Gateway of Song

A YOUTH'S FIRST LOVE

MAID so fair, for but one kiss
Lift thou up each tender lip!
Nectar not more sweet than this
Rose-fed bees in meadows sip.
Morning-blithe this heart would leap
To be drowned in bliss so deep.

Turn, oh turn to me those eyes!
Lift their soft-fringed curtains up!
Let the love that in each lies
Tenderly o'erbrim its cup!
One soft beam from their blue light
Robes in dawn my darkest night.

Sweetest maid, give me thy voice!
Tuneful harps could never wake
Strains of more melodious noise
Than those lovely lips do make.
Sweet thy speech, oh sweeter far
Than the wild-bird's warblings are!

At the Gateway of Song

Yield, oh yield to me thy hand!
O'er one rose-bud finger's tip
Proudly would I then this band
With its golden luster slip;
While those cheeks shy blushes crowd
Crimson like a morning cloud.

O my love, give me thy heart!
Richer prize none ever drew.
Tender as the dove thou art;
Pure as light in morning's dew.
Time hath naught I would not give
In such bridal bonds to live.

MADISON, THE CITY OF THE
LAKES

SHE bideth here where many a roof
Peeps from its leafy screen,
As violets from that grassy woof
That waves round them its green.

Her treasures rich she doth unfold
To ply their magic spell.
Who would not for such wealth untold
In these fair borders dwell!

Leaves here and gem-like flowers take,
June-decked, their myriad dyes;
Here change the tints of each still lake
As change our summer skies.

And art hath here a masterstroke
Wrought in yon granite pile;
Whose crest, above our city's smoke,
Hails many a wood-clad mile.

At the Gateway of Song

Here gownèd wisdom's patient hand
Sprinkles her sapient lore;
Here round her crowds yon youthful band,
Lured by her golden store.

And music here within these bounds
Is rapt in studious hours,
That joy through maze of magic sounds
May wing our spirit's powers.

City most fair, by nature graced,
By music, learning, art,
Thy generous cup of joy I taste;
It binds thee to my heart.

If fate e'er under other skies
My listless steps prolong,
The dream of thy sweet haunts will rise —
All fragrance and all song.

Though to these lips still Lethe's mere
Her brimful chalice gave,
This heart would yet not cease to hear
Strains from Monona's wave.

Oh, never from sweet memory
Can such bright visions fade

At the Gateway of Song

As meet my look when pensively,
Alone, in woodland shade,

'Neath leafy richness autumn-still,
My lingering foot intrudes
Where rainbow-gowned upon his hill
Cool-breathed October broods!

For aye shall thy great dome be mine,
Fixed in my spirit's eye,
As fadeless as bright stars that shine
In midnight's moonless sky.

Long may'st thou, City of the Lakes,
Loved bride of beauty be;
Till rumor of thy sweetness breaks
O'er farthest land and sea!

AN AUTUMN REVERIE

E'EN while rings mute summer's death-knell
Blithe earth dons her richest vest;
As when day's spent life is dwindling
Crimson-sandaled smiles the west.

Now each frost-pinched herb is dying
As the night-breeze waxes cold;
Yet the leafy woods in gladness
Wear their purple, scarlet, gold.

'Tis earth's way: rose-fingered beauty
Strews white garlands o'er the tomb;
And a smile, like sweetest childhood,
Lightly plays mid sorrow's gloom.

O'er the surge-tossed shipman's body
Waves look blue and foam-caps fair;
Wind-torn lilies from their petals
With sweet incense sow the air.

Mid the wide cathedral's pillars
Wakes the plaintive dirge's strain;

At the Gateway of Song

Yet there steals the organ's sweetness
Into each wild mourner's pain.

Pictured on yon traceried window,
Cross-encumbered worth doth go;
Yet a look, of mystic beauty,
Like a mantle masks the woe.

Twilight creeps with deepening shadow,
And its dusk lies sifted far;
Yet it lifts, to cheer the bleakness,
Clothed in light an evening star.

Thus doth life, like autumn, mingle
Tears and laughter into one;
And its midnight shadows gather
Soft reflections from the sun.

Yea, 'tis oft from wells of sadness
That the richest joys upspring;
As unseen from mists of darkness
Nightingales their carols fling.

Fear not then lest black-eyed sorrow
Banish from thy heart its bliss;
Mid all threats her blue-eyed sister
Glads thee with her sweetest kiss.

At the Gateway of Song

But with hope-uplifted spirit,
Bruised amid life's giddy whirl,
Labor till the torturing pebble
Garbs its rugged breast with pearl.

A RURAL CHURCHYARD
REVERIE

L OVE brings me to the grassy swell
Where thou beneath art sleeping.
Here dewdrops on the violets tell
Where moonèd night sat weeping.
And with the tears dark nature shed
Mine own are freshly numbered;
Though many winters now are fled
Since first thy beauty slumbered.

Some laud the credulous future's dower,
Which lures with golden blisses.
And some extol life's present hour
When wild with love's first kisses.
But vanished times my soul doth saint,
Enriched by old affection;
And doth its loveliest pictures paint
When schooled by recollection.

Here in this valley week by week
I watched thy girlish splendor:
Thy love-becrimsoned, dimpling cheek,

At the Gateway of Song

Thy sympathies sweet and tender,
Thy strength to feel misfortune's blow
Nor sulk with dark displeasure,
Thy maiden virtue's native glow,
Thy loveliness without measure.

At twilight sleeps day's dusty chore;
Then I, a darkling rover,
To thee betake, as oft before,
My step through fragrant clover.
The moon her silver mantle shows;
The night's starred angels cluster;
But yonder light thy window throws
Outvies their fairest luster.

That matchless morn let thought unmask
My steps by thee did linger
Till at thy nightly cottage task
Deft played thy nimble finger.
Too oft thy fancy-following breast
From its light task was straying.
Thine eyes, half unawares, confessed
What secrets there were playing.

We roamed that day through lighted air
Or through the woodland shadow;

At the Gateway of Song

For tinted gems to deck thy hair
I robbed the spicèd meadow.
To stay thy step across the brook
A hand, it seemed, was needed;
Such thrill in that sweet task I took
Its waters sang unheeded.

A nook we found all leaf-bedimmed,
And peaceful to completeness.
Faintly the wind-kissed foliage hymned
Its "Träumerei" with sweetness.
The force of nature's mystic spell
Wrought miracles in our bosoms.
Love bloomed, as doth in spring our dell,
Its buds all changed to blossoms.

Thy gentle hand I clasp in mine.
Thy heart itself discloses
As lovelier glow those cheeks of thine
Than blush midsummer's roses.
By thought transformed, this happy wood
Goes pranked in double beauty;
The ills of life are drowned in good;
And joy alone seems duty.

At the Gateway of Song

I hold no bitter spite at Death.
His pride seems fit for scorning.
The spirit lives; he takes the breath.
His night must fear the morning.
Though mystery shrouds our wondrous life,
Hope keeps the warm heart beating;
Surveys through this dark mortal strife
A star of future meeting.

Yon cottage where I yet reside
Seems stored with desolation.
But dreams, that ever with me bide,
Work marvelous transformation.
That silent hearth is vocal still;
For fancy hears thee singing;
There notes thine eyes with pity fill,
Or hails thy laughter's ringing.

THE SNOW-STORM

ONE morning, as I viewed the silent town,
Where all I saw was overdomed with
gray,

A feathery shower of flakes came tumbling
down.

Some swift as pouncing hawk upon his prey
Shot earthward; others, loitering by the way,
Straggled about, or paused a bit. And I,
As watching children happily skip in play,
Was pleased to see these birdlings of the sky,
White-winged, playfully down from their cold
cloud-nest fly.

Meagerly few at first, but more and more,
Till ten times o'er as countless as the sand
Which laboring sea-waves ridge on sloping
shore,

Sprinkled the storm its snow-drops o'er the
land.

Dim grew, and yet more dim, on every hand,
The spire, the dwelling, and the leaf-lorn tree,
Till all of these, save such as nearest stand,

At the Gateway of Song

Were fused to solid gray. A mite to me
Remained of that broad prospect I am wont to
see.

O generous storm, how thou hast richly dressed
This brown old earth in velvet of pure white!
Surely I dare affirm that keenest quest
Of eagle-sighted eye were baffled quite
To find thereon one tiniest speck that might
Be counted soilure. Oh do thou, I pray,
Uncloud the sun, that sparklings, diamond-
bright,
May kindle all where in the flashing ray!
Could aught of beauty's best then rival such display?

A modest workman thou; no vain parade,
No boast, nor loud and flaunting show is there
In thine achievement, as is seen displayed
Oft in the summer's clamorous downpour,
where
The frequent lightnings spread a dazzling flare,
And splinter oak, and boom with ponderous
sound;
And swaggering winds make threat on threat to
tear

At the Gateway of Song

The grasping, sinewy root from out its ground.
Yet is thy noiseless task with equal blessing
crowned.

Why, mute of footfall, hast thou hither
strayed?

Thy secret purpose to mine ear disclose.
No word? I'll deem thee then a timid maid,
Who saw'st this earth when through his veins
there flows

The blood of full-blown springtide, and the
firstling rose

And violet variegate his emerald dress,
And lovedst him; and now in his repose
Of winter sleep thou comest to caress,
And to unconscious lips soft-lapsing kisses press.

Thy myriad flakes — with pains thou wrought-
est each,

The cream of artistry. And yet of these
How few are ever viewed! Storm, didst thou
teach

The dextrous Greek, who set the storied frieze
High in the temple's dusk, where no man sees,
Chipping thereon as much of beauty's spell
As graced his marbles eyes discerned with ease?

At the Gateway of Song

Each dainty snow-drop thou hast wrought so
well
Of thy transcendent workmanship doth mutely
tell.

THE PLANTING OF AN IVY

*Written for Arbor Day ceremonies of a
public school.*

BY THIS brick wall
Of learning's hall,
Where echoes mock the children's call,
A tender vine
We here resign
To earth's upbuilding powers benign.

Let fairest day
Her sunlight play
On the damp soil's encircling clay,
Till it wax warm
And shield from harm
Of shriveling frost this slender form.

Here will it grow
From snow to snow,
While winds lie hushed or tempests blow.
Through moments mild,

At the Gateway of Song

Through moments wild,
Kind Mother Earth will tend her child.

May nature dower
Each creeping hour
With force to shape this leafy bower;
Until at last,
When years are past,
This wall with green be overcast.

A summer scene
Of living green,
In fall it waves a crimson screen;
But brown and bare
In the wintry air
It hangs like coarse and tangled hair

Though, like a thief,
In season brief
Chill winter pluck each fading leaf,
The spell of spring
New life will bring,
And round it fuller vesture fling.

Here shall be heard
The warbling bird;

At the Gateway of Song

While music of the leaf, wind-stirred,
Shall softly fall
On the mantled wall,
And mingle with the belfry's call.

You who today
In bright array
Plant here this upward-climbing spray,
In learning's quest
Let eager zest
Uplead you to some noble crest.

Thus you, my class,
Each lad and lass,
Who daily truth's rich stores amass,
Shall scale the height
Whose morning bright
O'ertops your valley's lessening night.

At the Gateway of Song

CRADLE SONG

S LUMBER till dawn wake thee,
Baby, in thy bed.
May no terror shake thee,
Though dark shadows spread.
Listening love shall never
Fail to note thy cry.
Loving hands shall ever
To thy comfort fly.

Night, through your dark borders
Send but breezes warm;
And, through strictest orders,
Banish cloud and storm.
Let the bright stars twinkle
From their rounded deep,
And all nature sprinkle
Sounds that nourish sleep.

Day, when morn breaks o'er us,
Brightening clouds and rills,
Lure thy wingèd chorus
From their leafy hills.

At the Gateway of Song

Bid them fling their sweetest
Notes round baby's nest,
And with warblings meetest
Glad her waking breast.

Whether night or day be
Rolled through east and west,
All things love thee, Baby,
Give thee of their best.
Earth spread out her treasure.
Heaven her grace bestow.
Love in unbound measure
Through all channels flow.

At the Gateway of Song

HOSPITAL REMINISCENCE

SO LOVELY didst thou look when in gray
 morn
Thou cam'st into our room with fairy
 tread,

Blooming with grace — as of an angel born —
From thy fair ankles to thy dainty head!

Thine eyes gleamed soft and gentle, and so blue.

How at the sight of them my pain did flee!

And from thy voice, as music sweet, I drew

Such charms as from all heaviness do free.

So good it was, sweet maid, when thou wert by,

Bending above my bed with gentle care,

Thy cheeks rose-tinted as at dawn the sky,

Thy snow-white cap perched lightly in thy
 hair!

Oh could I then have held thee to my breast,

Of all earth's daughters loveliest, gentlest, best!

INWARD BEAUTY

WHEN I contemplate thy sweet beauty's
store,
And think how greedy time will spare
it not,
But with rude wrinkles write thy smoothness
o'er,
And from thy ruined cheeks bright roses blot,
While fades the luster of thy golden hair,
And dulness mars thine eyes' mirth-sparkling
blue,
And all that in thee's fair is made not-fair,
As buds of summer when chill blasts ensue,
Light is the grief I feel that this is so;
For well I see, whatever change befall
Those traits of beauty that the eye doth know,
Thy soul's rich beauty can no change appall.
Thy virtue and thy love soil not with age,
But, stone in strength, repel time's stubborn
rage.

MEDITATION IN AUTUMN ON
THE DEATH OF NATURE

A GREAT life now hath gone into its
tomb.

That fluttering green, which whispered
when the breeze

Shook the gray branches, now by winter's doom
Spreads in dry death beneath the unburdened
trees.

Those numberless blades which once in quiet
mirth

Sipped their green substance from the April rain,
Mantling in cloak of grass the bemeadowed
earth,

Shroud 'neath their wilted stems bleak autumn's
plain.

No bird-lulled morn walks forth in garment
gray.

With dew the cups of her sweet flowers to fill;
For those frail forms, that with mild winds did
play,

At the Gateway of Song

Crushed 'neath the weight of frost, lie cold and
still.

Spread then, gray wintry sky, your pall of
snow,

And with wind flutes a sweet, sad requiem blow.

CHILDHOOD

FREE-HEARTED child, in thee no base
alloy
Stains the pure mind five summers could
bestow.

Thy deeds, thy words but image the sweet joy
That bubbles in thy breast. Thy life doth glow
Richer in promise than gray morning's star,
Which augurs the blue noon; or roses fair
Ere yet their scarlet curls unhooded are
To sate with beauty the betwitchèd air.
I love to watch thee at thy gentle play,
And catch the happy laughter in thy glance.
My weary cares in it are swept away;
Disburdened thoughts to its gay music dance.
All pain and anguish from thy footfall flee!
Long chant thy maiden mind its native glee!

THE STARS

WHAT mystic sweetness in those tranquil fires
That in the blackness of deep midnight
burn!

Beribboned splendor, as I well discern,
Mars not the mantle that night's bareness tires.
No dazzling colors flare; but starry choirs,
Clad in their native sweetness, earthward turn
Nightly their swan-white loveliness, and spurn
Betinselled trim, to which vain man aspires.
Crimson yon stretch of eastern cloud, gay morn,
When with o'er-bubbling mirth our spirits play,
Or fame upbears us on its curbless flight.
But when sweet love from a maid's glance is
born,
Or saints kneel meekly at their shrines to pray,
Visit thy dusk, star-roofed abode, fair night.

MYSTERY AND LOVELINESS

THE cloud-born gold of an autumnal eve
Now melts to bleakness; and night's dingy
hour

A deep-felt mystery doth sweetly weave
O'er bush, and darkling pine, and tall church-
tower.

Through the dun vault of night a weird bell-
note

Chimes o'er broad-watered banks to timorous
ears.

Some plaintive night-bird from its ominous
throat

Crowds the dream-amorous breast with pleasing
fears.

Low on the verge of yon dark western sky —
O'er her trim shape the vast star-peopled night—
The sweet moon's blushing nakedness doth lie,
And weds her crescent's beauty to my sight.
With fathomless mystery and chaste loveliness
Doth night's bold alchemy our spirits bless.

SONNET TO MILTON

MILTON, 'twas said that thou didst
wrongly then
When from the muse's path thou didst
depart,
Forsaking, as might seem, thy noble art,
The fruit whereof thou owedst to all men —
Those visions of high thought which from thy
pen
Did later soar — to hurl thy piercing dart
In party strife, sore labor for that heart
Which three broad worlds could circle in its
ken.
I judge not so. No narrow spirit wrought
To drag thee from Parnassus; duty spake,
Stern voice wherein thou ever took'st delight.
For liberty of life, of soul, of thought,
O'er England at that hour in fear did quake
Lest it by tyrant's doom should vanish quite.

At the Gateway of Song

TO MILTON IN HIS BLINDNESS

SUN-LOVING eagle, though thy day had
fled,
Thou didst not doom thyself to sit on
earth

In mute dejection with thy wing unspread.
That hope which in thy daytime had its birth
Was wedded to thee still; and thou didst seek,
Great soul, undaunted and untamed by night,
To be companion of the cloud and peak,
Enamored still of bold, adventurous flight.
Nor sun, nor moon, nor star reigned in the sky
To light for thee this world with radiant beam;
Yet with thy spirit's light thou didst descry
Huge forms that dwell in vision or bright dream.
In daring song thine awe thou didst display;
Then night did go as death brought in thy day.

PROPHETIC CONFIDENCE

NOT cold indifference, nor biting scorn,
Nor the sly snares of falsehood can pre-
vail

Against bold truth so far that it shall fail,
Or from some seeming death be not reborn.
But like the imperial sun, which in the morn
Breaks from the cold confinement of night's jail,
Swift to its destined height its strength will
scale,

Nor shall one burning beam be from it shorn.
For never dream that man's high-purposed
mind,

Wrought in the likeness of the Great Unseen,
Can sit at ease while truth hath not the crown.
God will speak forth and sturdy champions find,
Whose sleepless hearts will never rest, I ween,
Till falsehood's castled might be battered down.

RELIGIOUS FAITH

AS IN that painting where the Virgin
stands,
Holding her babe, and where with pious
mien

The meek Saint Barbara kneels with clasped
hands,

While vested round in pompous garb is seen
The pope, with eyes uplift and temples bare,
As if he begged some boon for needy men,
That numberless band of cherubs in the air
Its wingèd presence opens to our ken;
Or as at Dothan on the hill-tops stood
The fiery chariots when proud Syria's host
Besieged the prophet, and their hardihood
Was quickly shattered like an idle boast;
So heaven doth stand about us hour by hour,
And yields to virtuous deeds celestial power.

At the Gateway of Song

THE LIGHT OF MEN

THROUGH many-centuried time
Still glows that truth sublime
Which through thy deeds outflamed its mar-
velous way.
For on earth's soil below
Did ne'er such virtue grow
As might with ampler force our spirits sway.
What depth of saintliness is there
In time's earth-compassing sea doth with thine
own compare?

'Twas well that inward light
Should sing with fabling might
Its cradle-songs of love to greet thy birth:
See wise men from afar
Follow that westering star
On quest of wisdom of transcendent worth;
And through the night hear angels sing,
And news of world-wide joy to awe-struck
shepherds bring.

At the Gateway of Song

Calm as a summer day
Upon their quiet way
Thy feet set out to pace their wondrous
course.

No zeal that's overwarm,
No John-the-Baptist storm,
Broke the large wisdom of thy milder force.
Thy strength no debt to loudness owes;
By potent meekness did it win and firm repose.

Thy listeners from thee heard
No forced or servile word,
And each strong deed spake echo of thy soul.
No art of courtly grace
Made the dissembling face
Hide what the bosom thought like broidered
stole.

Sincerity o'er thee did rule;
Thy works thy spirit show like some still-
watered pool.

Not in some bounded rule
Shaped by the bookish school,
Waging to picture truth its futile strife,
But in that inward glow
Which the sage heart doth know

At the Gateway of Song

Thou found'st a northern star that leads to
life.

Nature to thee thy goodness brings;
Soul-free as summer brook thou art that seaward
sings.

For God in nature lives,
And to each spirit gives
A sense to know what brings it to its best.
Man's heart doth prize the right
And saintliness breeds delight
If but the pious mood inspire the breast.
God greets us in the rising sun,
And manhood at its best and deity are one.

From the Judean hill,
From cool Siloa's rill,
What blessings from thy deed have westward
spread!
Through many-tinctured panes
Of huge, rock-buttressed fanes
Dim o'er the kneeling throng the light was
shed;
Thy life, a richer light, doth play
On them and other throngs down to this current
day.

At the Gateway of Song

Bright Christmas carols swell,
And from glad Easter's bell
Joy fills the bosoms in each steepled land;
While nursed on yonder bed,
Which charity hath spread,
Sick poverty's lip doth bless the cooling hand;
Gray-beard despair wears curls of youth,
And selfish thought is changed to be the friend
of truth.

The sweet Madonna's face
And thy fair infant grace
Deftly hath paint to tinted splendors
wrought.
Music from days of yore
In mass or anthem's score
Hath hymned in thy glad praise its mystic
thought.
The poet's beauty-garnering pen
Proudly hath rhymed the story of the light of
men.

But O thou man of men,
Never so strong as when
Thy gentleness of love did humbly flow,
There at thy mortal loss

At the Gateway of Song

Upon the painful cross
How sweet that prayer for bitter hearts did
glow!

Sin shuddered at dread Sinai's smoke;
But such self-blotting love doth quell with
mightier stroke.

Purged by thy mighty prayer,
May selfish nations spare
To spoil each other with a greedy paw;
Forsake that murderous car
That stuffs blood-gulping war,
To build their common good on swordless
law;
Trade curb her over-active quest,
In fanes and beauty's halls to feed her spirit's
best!

A TALE OF FRIENDSHIP

WHERE a city lifts its towers,
And a sea's blue tossings lave
Land that never lacks its flowers,
Justice rules a statesman brave.

Nobly doth he ply his calling;
Ne'er deserts strict honor's path.
Yet can goodness save one's falling
Victim to a tyrant's wrath —

Wrath which rages without reason,
Wild as storm-brewed mountain flood;
Brands all opposition treason,
Though it brings the city good?

Falling thus, he pines enshrouded
In the murky dungeon's gloom,
Bound in chains; his heart o'erclouded
Waits the bloody bolt of doom.

"Four swift hours shall not sweep over,"
Snarls the king with murderous breath,

At the Gateway of Song

“Ere proud Damon shall discover
To disdain my will is death.

“Ere yon sun, now high in heaven,
Drives his chariot on the wave,
Shall that traitorous knave be given
Habitation in his grave.”

Yet he's noblest of all creatures
'Neath that bend of southern sky;
Gentlest thought hath shaped his features,
Loftiest purpose lights his eye.

In his breast no demon voices
Cry dishonor on his name;
Conscience-clear, his thought rejoices
In a life that owns no blame.

Yet, despite such comfort, sorrow
Thickening turns his blue to gray.
Can one tearless eye the morrow
That shall leave one soulless clay?

But his heaviest thoughts stray yonder
To his wife and babe at home.

At the Gateway of Song

Sadly soon their steps will wander
Where the sleepless sea-waves foam.

And his breast is deeply yearning
For the comfort they might bring —
But whose footsteps there are turning
Toward that palace of the king?

With all courtesy befitting
There he kneels before the throne
Where the vengeful monarch's sitting.
Generous purpose swells his tone

As he cries, "O King, I pray you,
Set the dungeoned Damon free
For a few brief hours; so may you
By just heaven rewarded be.

"Let him ride once more where sadly
Grieves his wife. Put me in chain!
Take my life — I give it gladly —
If he come not back again!"

Thus speaks Pythias, but the rabble,
Veered by every gust that's raised,

At the Gateway of Song

Growl their base vituperous babble
'Gainst the man they lately praised.

Pythias wins his bold petition;
On his wrist now clanks the chain.
Damon, with the king's permission,
Gallops o'er the grassy plain,

Where the bleak, unquiet ocean
Caps its moving waves in foam.
In his breast as wild commotion!
He once more shall see his home!

There the gentle head that's dearest
Shall upon his shoulder rest,
While her tearful eyes yield clearest
Visions of a tender breast.

And once more shall baby fingers
With light touch caress his cheek,
As in silence thus he lingers
With a heart too full to speak. —

Arrow-swift the hours are passing.
Round the headsman's fatal ax

At the Gateway of Song

Ghoul-like now a mob is massing.
Who's to pay the bloody tax?

Now the wearied sun lies sleeping,
Blanketed with vermilion cloud.
Blotting shades in stealth are creeping.
Wherefore jeers that fickle crowd?

Pythias comes to pay the forfeit.
Not one doubt his look betrays
Of his friend's faith. What is more fit
To be crowned with generous praise!

Let them jeer, the unbelieving —
Jeer at Pythias and his trust.
Where faith dies, there's no achieving
Friendship's goal. But note yon dust!

How that steed with furious bounding
Wafts his spurring rider here!
Damon comes! Now loud resounding
Rings the air with cheer on cheer.

Friendship is no spurious gilding.
Rim to center purest gold;
Like a rock-foundationed building,
Firm though torrents wild be rolled.

A LITTLE BLIND GIRL

THERE stood she on an April lawn;
The happy birds sang loud.
And sweetly in the warbling dawn
Her lily face, snow-white as fawn,
Gleamed on a flaming cloud.

From every nook of her pale face
Peeped forth her gentle soul.
Such mystic thought, such tender grace,
As fits a maid I there did trace
Clear as in lettered scroll.

I said, "My pretty maid, how sad
The darkness in thine eye!
Thou dost not see this bright earth clad
In herb and blossom, nor the glad
Blue laughter of the sky."

"Yet grieve not, stranger, for my lot,"
Her patient lips replied.
"Though to my nighted eyes this spot

At the Gateway of Song

Of springtide earth is but a blot,
Deep joys are not denied.

“I cannot see the rose unfold
Her splendors to the light.
Proud buttercups display their gold,
Meek violets peep forth purple-stoled,
Invisible in my night.

“Yet doth the earth rich fragrance yield
Through all her budded year;
And sweetest music is unsealed
In pipings of the grove and field;
And lisping winds roam here.

“So many pleasant sounds there be
My heart with sunlight fills:
Brisk robins in the bur-oak tree
That overbrim the morn with glee;
Pert meadow-watering rills

“That bubble over pebbled ways;
The weird, unbodied breeze
Which sweetly through the leafy maze
Of quivering birch or poplar strays;
Faint lullaby of bees;

At the Gateway of Song

“And then at eve the tender song
That mother croons to me,
Till every dread and sense of wrong
Seems lulled in silence — silence long
As vast eternity.

“Sometimes with memories I beguile
My sable hours away:
My father’s face, my mother’s smile,
All visions that I had the while
Ere yet I lost my day.

“Tear-drops in tender eyes appear,
From melting pity wrung;
I cannot see them, but I hear —
And sweet it is to me — the tear
That softens in the tongue.

“This world is such a kind abode,
All hearts so full of care
To make my load a lighter load,
To make my road a smoother road,
My winter mild and fair.

“And, stranger, if at times this earth
Scowls in her mood of wrath,

At the Gateway of Song

If blustering tempests banish mirth;
While thunders howl o'er lightning's birth,
As if to do me scathe,

"Yet I, meek, timorous, trembling dove,
Beyond these threatenings see,
In the far heavens that stretch above,
The smile of Everlasting Love;
At once all dread doth flee."

Her pallid brow no more is isled
Where clouds o'erred the east;
But her strong faith and spirit mild
O'ershine me still; a little child
I reverence as my priest.

And when my thought doth turn to you,
Sweet maid, now in your shroud,
At once there beams upon my view
The silver edge, so bright of hue,
That nightly rims the cloud.

BOYHOOD DAYS

AT MEMORY'S nod I travel back
Into far boyhood's prime;
Though much be painted there, alack!
That's blackened o'er by time.

Yet mid the blotting grime of years
Some pictured forms peep through;
Youth-tinctured joys and lightsome fears
Sweep thence into my view.

Awhile, then, will I linger here
In life's unclouded May,
Where joy's fair leaf grows never sere;
'Tis the bright land of play.

Lo, where the melting breezes float
In spring o'er maples bare!
Thrilled by the morn, with trumpet throat
The red-breast carols there.

And in the hedgerows east and west
My greedy look may spy

At the Gateway of Song

The bluebird; his trim-feathered vest
Apes the sea-tinted sky.

Long, too, ere winter-battling spring
Doth like a lamb appear,
The windflower from its nook I bring,
First-born of the new year.

The wind-built clouds — I watch them shine
Aloft in summer's blue.
I woo the lisping, sea-voiced pine
When the feeble north blows through.

Yon spotless cloud it is my boat;
From earth it sails so far.
In fancy on its deck I float;
And birds my boatmen are.

Forth through the light, o'er field and hedge,
Floats eagle-like my car. —
Lone on the wide world's eastern edge
Climbs the sweet evening star.

Not colored now we take our flight
As when the sun, hung low,
Did dip his brush in crimson light,
And sweep from stern to bow;

At the Gateway of Song

But the blond moon her silver beams
Upon our sails doth play,
As many a starry cresset gleams
Where through the dark we stray.

But shunning now these airy dreams,
Births from a teeming brain,
To view what is, and not what seems,
I pace our earth again.

Beside the brook with rod I sit;
Beneath, cool fishes stray.
The sun burns hot, and yet no whit
Annoys his scorching ray.

Or else the liliated pond I wade
To seek for milk-white spoil;
Or mid the breeze-rocked poplar's shade
Pursue some sportive toil.

Now beats the rain; the racing surge
Swells, and o'errides the brim
Of the slender stream; my spirits urge
Therein to dive and swim.

When winds uprise and mutter loud,
Bending old trees in wrath,

At the Gateway of Song

And thunders, plunging through the cloud,
Shriek on their crooked path;

When leaves in crowds go skipping past,
Like swift valkyries flee
With wildering sweep on moaning blast;
Oh then, what joy to be

A playmate of the storm, and feel
The push of its deep might,
Watching with fear huge tree-tops reel
As wild with dark delight!

But joy more sweet! the barefoot maid!
What richer bloom hath May!
Where clustered oaks fling dappled shade
Our happy footfalls stray.

And lightly here across the stream
Her merry foot doth bound.
How in her locks a nestling beam
Of sun-gold glimmers round!

Flowers that bewitch the winds of June
Her cherub looks outvie;
No rill that runs can match the tune
That in her speech doth lie.

At the Gateway of Song

At church how sweetly o'er the book,
When morning prayers are read,
With meek and unaffected look,
She bends her guileless head!

A glow of rich vermilion light,
Flown from a window there,
High-arched, with saints and prophets dight,
Kisses her loose brown hair.

And when the soft, rich music floats
Down to my spellbound ears,
With raptures like those fabled notes
Chimed by the moving spheres,

Its sweetness with my thoughts of her
Blends to pure harmony;
Idly I muse: "What if she were
Melted to melody!"

Quick magic bides in autumn's cold;
A rose is every leaf.
But soon each shrub will shed its gold;
Beauty is sweet, but brief.

For autumn comes with spoiling hand;
Then all things droop and die.

At the Gateway of Song

The crisp leaves race in withered band,
And a mad wind mounts the sky.

A sable night falls drear and bleak;
The wind's sad spirit moans.
The gust-blown gate's huge hinges creak
By those cold marble stones.

And that broad willow that waves o'er
The sober churchyard gate —
With cautious foot I it explore;
For there some ghost may wait,

In sheeted muteness grimly haunt
The dusk of that old tree,
Till the rude cock its courage daunt
With shrill-pitched prophecy.

Though winter comes in mood severe,
He brings his store of fun;
I track the game (they fly in fear)
With eager dog, and gun.

Here on the ice, a merry crowd,
We cut our scudding flight;
Our glad halloo, our laughter loud,
Tunes the mute dome of night.

At the Gateway of Song

The stars with bright-eyed twinkle seem
To greet us with their smile;
While meteor-swift, like some wild dream,
Flits by each frosty mile.

Farewell then now, ye happy years
When life was in its flower;
Yet often come — your coming cheers —
To bless some listless hour.

For it were well if sober age
Oft heard its songs of youth,
And scrawled some rich, romantic page
In its deep tomes of truth.

WISCONSIN STATE-HOUSE AS
SEEN AT DAWN FROM
MONONA'S SHORE

AS NIGHT doth cease, thou snowy pride,
To mask thee like an Eastern bride,
To gaze at thee the morn, gray-eyed,
Doth gladly wake;
And paints thee in the breezeless tide
Of this pure lake.

Now let the sun, from night's cool rest,
Leap from his bed with glowing breast,
And dash upon thy golden crest
His surge of fire;
Till o'er yon cloud-encumbered west
Red beams expire.

Yea, thou most lovely art when day
Wings the broad arch of his blue way,
And clouds of snow in beauty stray
O'er thy tall head,
While wide-outstretched below gleams May
In floral spread.

At the Gateway of Song

But lovelier art thou still by night,
When in dark robe mild heaven is dight,
And broods o'er thee the pale starlight
 With its soft beam.
Wrought on the dark of wave-foam white
 Thou then dost seem.

A temple art thou, built to stay?
Or frostwork, which the next new day
With scourge of fire will drive away
 In steaming flight,
And leave our hearts beneath the sway
 Of lost delight?

Nature then wore her sunniest mirth
When here she wrought this stretch of earth —
These fragrant hills with their rich birth
 Of woodland green.
Bright in the still lake's watery girth
 Their pictures sheen.

Perchance some spirits, hovering near,
Such as do haunt night's candled sphere
Or wing day's turquoise regions clear,
 With whist amaze

At the Gateway of Song

This wonder eyed, and said, "We'll here
Our palace raise."

Then at the waving of their wand
From the blue sky a fairy band
Sang loud their madrigals o'er the land;
Nor could there be
Music more sweet than was this grand
Song symphony.

Dull granite heard, and from its bed
In caverned mountain hither fled;
Gray block to block was firmly wed
As rose the wall;
Till, melody-built, the great dome's head
Surmounted all.

Alas! I dream. Not mystic power,
Not sky-born music bade thee tower
Or shaped for thee thy deathless dower.
Loud labor's strife,
The grime and strain of many an hour
Gave thee thy life.

Not from one brain thy birth was brought;
But art in age-long labors wrought,

At the Gateway of Song

And spirits led by beauty sought
For forms sublime.
Thus shin'st thou now in splendors caught
From far-off time.

Some charms that in cathedraled Rome
Lure pilgrims to St. Peter's dome,
Or grace Athena's crumbling home
 'Neath Attic skies,
O'er slopes that kiss Monona's foam
In granite rise.

High o'er the slumbering city's bed,
Beneath thou seest the world outspread —
Wide-circling hills, where morn hath shed
 Her dole of dew;
And rill-bound lakes, a slim gray thread
 Beaded with blue.

Young child of art, a soberer bloom
Shall touch thee when thy years assume
The dignity which age doth doom
 To mortal state,
And here beneath thy walls find room
Deeds that are great.

At the Gateway of Song

This life that in our breasts doth glow,
Dislodged by its relentless foe,
Shall swift to dark oblivion flow,
 Like a breaker's foam;
Yet still will tower o'er all laid low
 Thy spacious dome.

Live then, and bless each mortal throng
That seeks thee through the ages long.
Sing from thy hill sweet beauty's song,
 Music for eye.
Fear not lest time shall do thee wrong;
 Thou canst not die.

MORN

DEW-LOCKED, melodious morn so bright,
Mother of health and deep delight,
Soon at our rills thy light shall play.

For dawn's now fading star doth say
Tonight's pale watchmen thou art near;
While the loud cock, his trumpet clear
Blown through the dusk with startling might,
Hath put each fairy dance to flight,
And banished to its sod-roofed lair
Each bloodless ghost that took the air.
What though thy sun's gray-hooded face
As yet deigns not these hills to grace!
See oracled in yon scaling east:
Night its Cimmerian rule hath ceased.

Sweet summary of wild nature's power
To tune with joy each laughing hour,
Whose native store of ambered curls
Contemns all artifice of pearls,
Nor needs the witcheries of the rose,
Nor diamond combs, nor silken bows —
Since in its own sweet beauty's might

At the Gateway of Song

It yields the utmost of delight —
Come, the dewdrops cool the flower;
Guide my step through morning's hour.
For the sights which I shall see
Show nature's free simplicity;
Such as in thy beauty lies,
Which hath art to purge mine eyes
And bid new splendors to be seen
In simple vales and woodlands green.

But ere I trace thy dew-dropped heel,
A brief space let my spirit feel
Divinely deep that joyance bright
Which there upwells at the birth of light.
From the dun east, like peerless youth,
Unconquerable as the might of truth,
Through swart, night-harboring atmosphere
Bounds forth thy light in glad career;
And so doth flood the breast with joy
That cares, nor fears, nor doubts annoy.
Not the bright trumpets which resound
When Radames, with victory crowned,
Sees at near hand the Theban gate,
Where grateful words his valor wait,
Bring to the brain more surging cheer
Than when dawn's first sweet beams appear,
And a new day down eastern hills

At the Gateway of Song

Trips jubilant on o'er woods and rills;
While o'er the mind such song doth play
As girds it for life's heaviest day.

Forth then, sweet herald of delight,
Ere the drab dawn can make its flight.
Slow-tramplng first, through archèd grove,
With amorous ear my soul would rove,
Where leaf-screened birds for matins meet;
Whose glad emotions, organ-sweet,
Reflect through raptures of their tune
Rich splendors of a morn in June.
For deep within their tufted bower,
Through prescience of quick fancy's power,
Their peering thoughts may haply spy
Yon long gray strip of eastern sky
Morn-frescoed with such magic tint
As once did Titian's pigments print,
With ripeness of Venetian taste,
On those brisk shapes his pencil traced.

But now that sylvan anthem's o'er.
I would with thy fair leave explore
The windings of that wayward brook
Which lakeward runs its warbling crook;
There let my wistful spirit glean
Deep quiet from yon rural scene,
Where tranquil as a baby's sleep

At the Gateway of Song

The spirit of repose doth creep
O'er all below yon windless sky,
Which broods in mute serenity,
As awed by sense of Power Divine.
And sweet it is to chant the line —
Here where the babbling streamlet crooks —
Which sings of "books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones," and good in all
That crowds this turquoise-canopied ball;
And list in dream those woodland ditties,
Which, far remote from fame and cities,
Yield blitheness to that banished throng
That scour the wilds with merry song;
In scorn of courts, where custom kills,
Such prize pursue as freedom wills.

But fare thee well, sweet Arden's wood.
Lured dreamwise by this pastoral mood
Where trombone, horn, bassoon, and string,
With flute and oboe, featly bring
The quickening soul beneath the spell
That in some rural nook doth dwell,
On such symphonic strain I soar
To thoughts more sweet than e'er before
Were gathered from the murmuring sound
Of April brooklets seaward bound,
Or chirp of bird, or rumbling loud

At the Gateway of Song

That shakes the rude storm-pregnant cloud.
For nature's winsomeness doth soar
On wings of that orchestral score
Whose rapt finale breathes the prayer
Of grateful shepherds when the air,
Recapturing now its tranquil state,
Each bodeful, muttering tone doth bate.

But yon rivulet's tripping measure
Now invites to lighter pleasure,
And its sweet, resistless gleam
Quells the visions of my dream.
Then let me my fortunes try
Where the nibbling fish do lie
Low in that still-watered pool
Which an oak's huge shadows cool.
But if, mistrustful of my hook,
Each cautious denizen of the brook
Shall disdain its beckoning lure —
Though patience cool might yet endure —
Guide me in thy gracious power
To other joys that fit the hour.

Lead on then, pray, where o'er the green
Brisk urchins sport in joyance keen:
Smite quick the brown-striped gopher when
He plunges from his flooded den;
Or speed into their nets to bring

At the Gateway of Song

The butterfly with speckled wing;
Or curb, on its wild, azure flight
O'er the tall spire, their mounted kite.
Then bid my looks more gladly stray
Where yonder loose-locked maidens play,
As in their apron's fold they glean
A floral harvest from the green —
Rich clover-blooms of purple hue,
Trim violets garbed in kirtles blue,
Wild roses (that bespice the breeze)
Made vocal by the laboring bees —
To deck their playhouse, crudely made,
Under the broad-branched maple's shade.

But see, the dew-drenched morn hath fled;
Advancing noontide's withering tread,
Which thou, auroral maid, dost fear,
Forewarns me that the time is near
Of midday rest. Begone! begone!
But greet me at the next new dawn.

At the Gateway of Song

A FABLE

Suggested by Henry van Dyke's story, "A Handful of Clay."

THOUGH set before thee in a simple way,
Hear thou this story of a piece of clay,
Which long had slumbered on its saffron
bed,

While slow-paced ages with majestic tread
Over it swept on their wide-circling round.
Then was it spaded from the lowly ground,
And put into the potter's hand, and there
By deftly shaping art and plodding care
Was crushed and molded till it stood complete;
Then hardened slowly in the glowing heat.

"Much patient labor was bestowed on me.
Might I but look upon myself, I'd see,"
It thought, "such beauty as divinely shows
Its crimson splendors in the budding rose,
Or dwells aloft upon the bended bow
That vernal sunbeams on the raindrops throw.
More fair am I than is the fairest star;

At the Gateway of Song

More richly tinted than bright mornings are,
Or those rare lights that in the diamond play."

Deceitful fancy, soon to flit away!
Ere sober night did into blackness dye
And trim with stars the sapphire of the sky,
It stood upon a bank beside a pool,
And saw reflected in the waters cool
Its own clear image. In the sleeping tide,
Which like a polished mirror lay, it spied
No form of beauty, but a vessel crude,
As if 'twere fashioned by some artist rude.

Now while it languished in a grief profound,
A gardener came, and snatched it from the
ground,

And filled it with soft earth, and planted there
A rough, dark bulb, whence shot into the air
A stateliness of stem. The leaves' dark green
Gave comely setting to the ample sheen
Of snow-white blossoms that adorned its head.

"Now clearly do I see," the vessel said,
"The purpose of my life. It is not mine
In beauty's charms to dazzle and to shine.
Rather in lowly guise let me uphold
Where all may see the green, the white, the gold,
Of this sweet Easter lily." Thus content
Henceforth its powers to this one aim it bent.

At the Gateway of Song

The knowledge gleaned by toil from learned
books,
From study of the flowers or running brooks,
From history's long and many-pictured page,
From sober sayings of the deep-browed sage,
Or from the language of that mystic scroll
Read when the eye turns inward on the soul, —
What is it? But an ornament? a show?
Looks it no higher? Does it aim so low?
Regard it as a vessel from whose cup —
Such be its noble part! — there may grow up
The Easter lily of a soul that's rife
With the strong merits of a worthy life,
Unspotted as the new-born lily's bloom,
Or that fair soul that vanished from the tomb
When our first Easter morn did sweetly shine
Down on the rugged hills of Palestine.

COLUMBUS IN FETTERS

CAPTAIN, I pray, take not my fetters off.
Here let them clank till that most high
command

Which doomed me to disgrace with blush of
shame

Shall break this riveted steel's wrist-chafing ring.
For when this ship of thine shall safe in port
Disgorge what here's intrusted to thy charge,
And throngs in strange bewonderment shall
view

This head, snowed over by tempestuous years,
These pain-scourged limbs that ply their falter-
ing pace,

Like outlawed thieves, companioned with vile
chains,

Shame will bepaint each cheek, and pity's tear
With ocean deepness will beflood all eyes.

And on the surge of this compassionate wave
The king uplifted shall most clearly see
How rude with cold ingratitude is the word
That sent me shackled to the Spanish shores;

At the Gateway of Song

And chide that ear of his which credence gave,
Ere truth was sifted, to the blatant tongues
Of libelous traducers. Who can rule
Where pride, lust, riot, idleness abound,
Yet make no enemies? My power withstood,
When I bare governance in this fertile soil,
The birth-proud cavalier and haughty priest,
Whom in their pride's despite I forced to set
Their idle fingers to some fruitful task,
Lest grim starvation with flesh-withering blight
Make waste our settlement. Could stripes be
banned

When oft into my westering vessel's hulk
Some Spanish prison puked a blasphemous mob
To fill the number of my shipmen up?
But humbled pride, subjected to constraint,
And lust that's baffled of night-stolen sweets,
And ruffian villainy by strict office curbed
Submissive tameness pay not to restraint,
But build ambitious strongholds of revenge,
By hate-begotten, shrewd-lipped falsehood
propped.

Malicious slander thus set forth my rule
As marred by deeds of reckless cruelty,
Though 'twas the spur of stern necessity
Which forced at times my spirit to look grim,

At the Gateway of Song

Forsake its native lamb-like, genial bent,
Loud growl in savage mask the tiger's role;
Which yet so soon as bettering moments smiled
Its natural drift to lenient lordship took.

Thus chain-encumbered to thy freighted ship,
Which, late disanchored from yon scented isle,
Now Spainward rides the rough, wide-weltering
surge,

Captain, I came, dismantled of my power,
That life-long grant of governance in such lands
As my adventurous sails should light upon —
By royal promise, I misthought, made sure.

Oh infelicity of that artless trust
Where hope is builded on the word of kings!
What fatal torment at no distant date
Will be the death of that sweet confidence,
Leaving the mind a desert lurking-place
For visitation of extinguished hopes;
Sad as the one lone leaf midwinter grips,
Or drooping violets where bleak marbles tell
How here lies sleeping a betrothèd maid
But late by the cold touch of death distilled
Into a memory! How sweet it were,
What rich amends for the dark ills of life,
Were all our efforts for another's boon
But a cathedral's portal which conducts

At the Gateway of Song

The o'erwearied foot into the soothing aisle
Of grateful bosoms! Captain, 'tis not so!

My deeds have earned this prize was promised
me.

Labored I have in the hot dust of day.
Do not the Spanish garners widely bulge
With fruitage of that toil? What fertile strands
My keels have added to the imperial soil
Which steads the rights of Spanish sovereigns
Since first I landed on yon western isle,
Wrapped in my scarlet cloak, with thankful lips,
Our green-crossed banner fluttering in the breeze
Of an October dawn! Nor can I doubt
Illimitable gold, hid in these shores,
Will heap proud measure in the delver's hand.
This isle here seen is the rich Ophir's self,
Whence the great Solomon, as parchment tells,
Brought to the sacred mount the shining ore
That decked his temple. Dive into these waves,
And for thy guerdon wear rich strings of pearl,
Which in green-curtained factories of the deep
A million craftsmen bleach with cunning hand.
The sportive wind that blows from yonder
grove
Sings of the spiced wealth that in it bides.

At the Gateway of Song

And those rich-feathered fowls — fancy might
urge

Saints were they once that glowed in colors
bright

From altar-panels or the church's wall,
Or 'neath a traceried arch from pictured glass,
By mystic spell transmuted into birds,
Installed as denizens of this fairy isle;
As Philomela once in Attic days
Translated was into a nightingale.

Nor was grim danger absent from the task
That blessed the Spaniard with such bounteous
store.

Who could foretell, when Palos mourned our
leave,

What hap awaited those bold mariners?
What fell disaster peered with vulture greed
To note the moment of their fatal loss?
I deem not, Captain, with the vulgar mass,
Whose minds so richly teem with monstrous
shapes,

Wherewith their fears do paint the untraveled
deep,

As childhood doth the mysteries of the night.
Long ere that first exploit had reason chased
Such idle trumpery from my sober brain.

At the Gateway of Song

Yet I knew not how soon my vessels' planks
Would float in fragments never to be seen,
When in all dearth of help some watery bulk,
Ambitioned vastlier than an Alpine ridge,
Uptossed the spotlessness of its frothy snow
Into the o'erwelkin'd gray. But Providence —
Praised ever be the mercy shown! — mixed not
My mortal substance with the briny surge,
To sate the gluttony of the ravenous shark
Or wane to nothingness in a liquid tomb;
But did, confederate with my dearest aims,
Safe blow my canvas to gold-entrail'd strands.
Gold is my quest, Captain, I do avouch —
Too oft, no doubt, to devil's-vantage yoked
When lawless rivals doggedly contend
For rank, estate, or place. But such a quest
Hath oft been fathered by well-purposed minds
Where thoughts were schooled to prize the
sacred glow
Of love or piety. Thus have I vowed,
For love of that fair town my boyhood knew,
To balm, with ducats of my future purse,
The suffering poverty of my native streets.
Yet note, good Captain, this my second vow,
But not performable till propitious years
Make rich my coffers with such mass of gold

At the Gateway of Song

As serves to set on foot some large emprise
Which few but royalty might dare to dream of:
That city, thou dost know, whose walls embrace

The sacred sepulcher, to our reproach
Pines in subjection to the will of those
Who oft defied us with their saber's blade,
Nor venerate the sanctities of our faith.

To snatch deliverance for that city's gate,
Safe lock its key into the church's clasp —
My hope on such bold enterprise doth fix.
The gold I bag thereto I dedicate.

Your look hath pity, Sir, as it did say,
"The rainbowed bubbles of a dreamer's brain
Prone to be duped!" so thickly curtained stand
The means whereby such enterprise doth win.
But faith sees strength in that which the bleared
eye

Doth brand as futile; mountains are movable.
This arm, though chained to sight, is free to
faith.

My hope, which sucks the milk of faith, can
sicken not;

But leaps, and laughs, and with assurance sings:

At the Gateway of Song

Sight weeps the winter brooklet yonder
In icy stillness cold and dead;
Faith hears, hope-lured, the ripples wander
With flute-note strain along their bed.
Sight notes with scorn the paltry smallness
Which yon flat maple seed doth show;
Faith greets the wind-rocked emerald tallness
Which from this wingèd mite will grow.

Sight sneers with its world-wise derision:
 "Success is sometimes bought with sin."
 But faith, which holds the broader vision,
 Knows naught but right can really win.
 Sight faultily notes the world in making,
 To partial glimpse is strictly bound;
 But faith, from hope its prospect taking,
 O'erlooks the vast, completed round.

Your duty summons, Friend? This visit's
kindness
Sings ever sweetly in my bosom's cage.

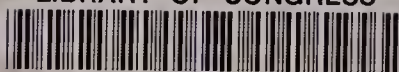
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